



Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT)

Distress Tolerance

STOP skill

adapted from: Linehan, (2015). 'DBT Skills Training Manual, 2nd ed.'

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What is Distress Tolerance?

- Distress Tolerance refers to a skill set from Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT). It teaches skills to help ride the wave of intense & overwhelming emotional distress. The distress can be so intense that it runs the risk of leading to destructive urges/behaviours. Distress Tolerance is defined as:
- Accepting yourself & the current situation in a nonjudgmental way.
- Accepting your environment without demanding that it be different.
- The ability to experience your emotions without trying to change them.
- The ability to observe your own thoughts & behaviours without trying to stop or control them.

When to use Distress Tolerance

When emotional distress becomes overwhelming.

When you are having intense pain that cannot be helped quickly.

When you are having extreme distress but the problem can't be solved immediately.

When you are feeling overwhelmed but need to do something important/urgent.

When you want to act in emotion mind & that would make things worse.

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STOP

The STOP skill is one of the 'first line of defence' skills in DBT's Distress Tolerance. It's aim is to stop any destructive urges that arise when distress is overwhelming.

S

Stop whatever it is you are doing. Completely disengage from the behaviours, actions, thoughts or activities and stop.

T

**Take a step back from the situation. Take a deep breathe.
Remove yourself physically and/or mentally.**

O

Observe. Observe one-mindfully, non-judgmentally, effectively. Observe yourself, your thoughts, feelings, behaviours, bodily sensations. Observe your environment & observe anyone that may be around you.

P

Proceed with caution. Ask Wise Mind.

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